

Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3432

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PIN, PINS, WA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA SITREP

REF: PRETORIA 3718

1. DURING VISIT TO NAMIBIA DEC. 10, 11 AND 12 EMBOFF HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH SEVERAL PARTICIPANTS IN NAMIBIA CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE. ALL EXPRESSED DEEP CONCERN OVER REPLACEMENT OF DIRK MUDGE BY A.H. DUPLESSIS AS LEADER OF WHITE DELEGATION. MUDGE APPARENTLY HAS EARNED TRUST OF DELEGATES AND HAS CONVINCED THEM THAT SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CHANGES CAN AND WILL COME. DUPLESSIS, HOWEVER, IS SEEN AS A CONSERVATIVE (ALTHOUGH NOT AS REACTIONARY AS EBEN VAN ZIJL) WHO MAY ATTEMPT TO RETARD PROGRESS THEY PERCEIVE BEING MADE.

2. SEVERAL SWAPO AND NNC OFFICIALS TOLD EMBOFF THAT
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THEY FEEL TALK WITH "ESTABLIS NENT" STILL POSSIBLE. IT

WAS MADE CLEAR THAT CONDITIONS SET BY NNC FOR PARTICIPATION ON CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS ARE, TO SOME EXTENT AT LEAST, NEGOTIABLE. ALTHOUGH SOME CONTACTS BETWEEN NNY AND GOVERNMENT APPARENTLY WERE MADE EARLIER (PARA 2 REFTEL), THERE HAVE BEEN NONE RECENTLY, AND THESE OFFICIALS FEEL NONE ARE LIKELY UNTIL WHITE POLITICS SETTLE DOWN. CHAOS AND BLOODSHED IN ANGOLA APPEARS TO BE HAVING EFFECT ON THINKING OF BLACK MILITANTS. MARTHA FORD, NNC VICE, PRESIDENT, SIAD, "WE CAN'T GIVE UP TALKING IF WE WANT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. LOOK AT OUR NORTHER NEIGHBOR."

3. SURFACT CHANGES, AT LEAST, ARE TAKING PLACE IN WINDHOEK. DISCRIMINATORY SIGNS HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM MOST PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND BUSINESSES, WITH LEAD BEING TAKEN BY PRIVATE SECTOR. THREE HOTELS AND FOUR RESTAURANTS OFFICIALLY ARE OPEN TO ALL RACES, AND OTHERS ARE SIMILARLY OPEN BUT WITHOUT OFFICIAL SANCTION. MULTIRACIAL DANCING IS TAKING PLACE IN SEVERAL ESTABLISHMENTS, WITH NO UNPLEASANT INCIDENTS THUS FAR.

4. GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO COME DOWN HARD ON DISSIDENTS. AT LEAST TWENTY PEOPLE REMAIN IN DETENTION, INCLUDING SIX CHARGED UNDER ERRORISM ACT. CHARGES AGAINST THESE SIX RANGE FROM DIRECTLY AIDING ASSASINS OF OWAMBO CHIEF MINISTER ELIFAS, TO GIVING R10 (DOLS. 11.50) TO SOMEONE WHO IN TURN GAVE TO GROUP WHOSE GOAL IS OVERTHROW OF ADMINISTRATION OF TERRITORY (CHARGE SHEET BEING POUCHED TO DEPT.). WORKER IN ANGLICAN CHURCH HEADQUARTERS RECENTLY WAS DEPORTED. OFFICIALS AT UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH HEADQUARTERS REPORT HARASSMENT BY SECURITY POLICE. TOW NNC OFFICIALS HAVE HAD PASSPORTS REFUSED.

5. COMMENT: NEXT SESSION OF CONSTITUTIONAL CONVERENCE, SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE MARCH 1976, MAY PROVE CRUCIAL. IF WHITE DELEGATION UNDER DUPLESSIS ATTEMPTS TO BACK OFF FROM START MADE UNDER MUDGE'S LEADERSHIP, SUPPORT OF MODERATE BLACKS VERY LIKELY WILL BE LOST. GOVERNMENT PROBABLY ALSO WILL BE FACED WITH CHALLENGE TO COME UP WITH SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TO PROVIDE CREDIBILITY FOR CONFERENCE BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE TERRITORY. IT MAY STILL BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POSSIBLE TO DRAW IMPORTANT SEGMENT OF BLACK MILITANT ELEMENT INTO CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS, BUT ANY BACKTRACKING ON PART OF WHITES WOULD END THAT CHANCE. WHITE POLITICAL INFIGHTING BETWEEN NOW AND MARCH MAY DECIDE THESE QUESTIONS. BOWDLER

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